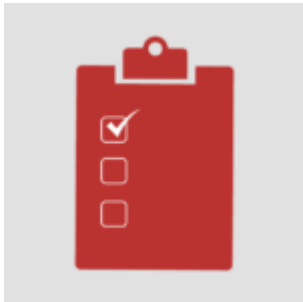


OHS-Related Drones Systems Use Compliance Checklist



Increasing numbers of companies are using remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS), aka drones, to carry out occupational health and safety (OHS) program functions. One prominent application is using drones embedded with video cameras, GPS, sensors, communication equipment and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms that fly over a work site and relay real-time information to perform aerial inspections and monitoring to ensure that all required safety measures and procedures are being properly implemented. Using drones instead of workers to inspect equipment or conditions in elevated surfaces or spaces may also be an effective way to minimize vertical fall hazards.

As with most forms of AI technology, using drones to conduct inspections, monitoring, or other workplace safety activities can get you into trouble under privacy laws. The problem is that the data drone systems capture, analyze, and store may include images and other personal information about workers, visitors, and members of the public that's protected by privacy laws.

Because this is such a novel issue, it's easy for OHS directors to overlook. Even if you are tuned in to the privacy implications of drones use, it's hard to find guidance or best practices you can rely on. The good news is that the Ontario Information and Privacy Commission (OIPC) just published cutting edge guidance on responsible use of drones systems.

Although directed at police and law enforcement, much of the OIPC would apply to using drones to monitor, inspect, and ensure a safe workplace. Below is a compliant drone safety checklist you can implement in your workplace, available in doc and PDF formats.